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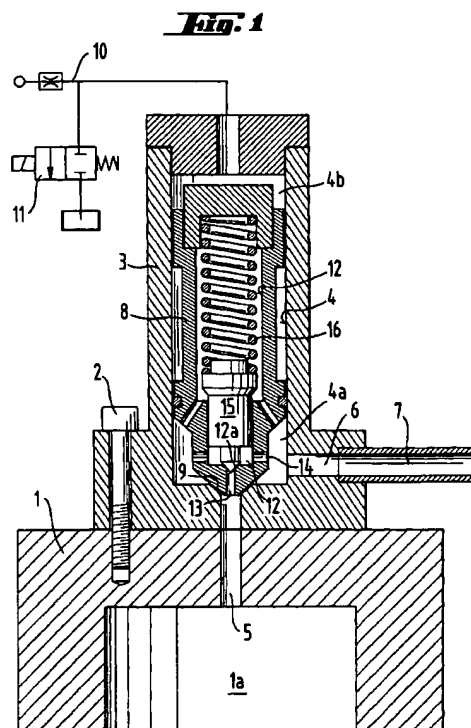
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(54) Control and safety valve arrangement in a fuel feeding system

(57) A control and safety valve arrangement in a fuel feeding system of an internal combustion engine, especially a large diesel engine, in which fuel is pumped from a fuel tank at least to one common pressure accumulator unit (1) and is fed therefrom under high pressure for injection into at least two cylinders of the engine. The pressure accumulator unit (1, 1a) is connected to the fuel tank by means of a separate return flow line (5, 6, 7) which is provided with valve means having two separate control arrangements operationally independent of each other so that the pressure accumulator unit (1) can be connected to the fuel tank by means of a first control arrangement under the influence of a separate control pressure when necessary and in addition by means of a second control arrangement if the pressure in the pressure accumulator unit (1) exceeds a certain selected limit value.



EP 0 964 153 A2

Description

[0001] This invention relates to a control and safety valve arrangement of a fuel feeding system, the arrangement being of the kind according to the preamble of claim 1.

[0002] In known pressure injection systems or rail systems for feeding fuel in internal combustion engines, there is the need for different kinds of valve arrangements. Especially when heavy oil or the like is used as fuel, the viscosity of the fuel has to be decreased sufficiently, before the engine is started, to make it possible for the fuel to be injected into a cylinder. This fuel viscosity reduction is achieved in practice by circulating the fuel through the fuel feeding system so that it is warmed up. Known common rail systems also require a valve function to limit the pressures used and a valve for depressurizing the system when stopping the engine or in an emergency situation. The implementation of these functions normally requires three different valve functions each requiring a separate valve.

[0003] The aim of the invention is to provide a new valve arrangement which is advantageous as to its construction and by means of which the valve functions referred to above can, at least partly, be integrated into a common construction to obtain a compact entity which is advantageous as to its costs. A further aim is for the valve arrangement to be applied in fuel feeding systems utilizing, especially, heavy fuel oil as the fuel.

[0004] The aims of the invention can be achieved by the control and safety valve arrangement of claim 1 and the other claims.

[0005] According to the present invention, a control and safety valve arrangement of the kind referred to is characterised in that the pressure accumulator unit is connected to the fuel tank by a separate return flow line which is provided with valve means having two separate control arrangements operationally independent of each other so that the pressure accumulator unit can be connected to the fuel tank by means of a first control arrangement under the influence of a separate control pressure when necessary and in addition by means of a second control arrangement in case the pressure in the pressure accumulator unit exceeds a certain selected limit value. Such an arrangement makes it possible to implement different valve functions required in common rail systems by making use of common structures.

[0006] If the first control arrangement comprises a precontrol valve, preferably a solenoid valve, for controlling the control pressure, the control pressure can be connected and disconnected quickly and precisely according to need. In practice the control pressure can with advantage be hydraulically implemented, the first control arrangement being, for instance, part of a servo oil circuit of the engine which is generally needed in any event to control the operation of fuel injection valves.

[0007] The second control arrangement may simply comprise a valve spring, the spring force and prestress

of which determine the valve opening pressure in accordance with the limit value.

[0008] Conveniently the valve means are located in a common valve unit fixed to the pressure accumulator unit and comprising a valve chamber through which said return flow line is led. In this case a space saving compact construction is obtained.

[0009] In an advantageous embodiment of the invention, the return flow line is provided with two valves arranged functionally in successive order. In this case the first valve in the flow direction is controlled by the first control arrangement and is located in the valve chamber and the second valve in the flow direction is controlled by the second control arrangement so that its opening force is smaller than that of the first valve in the flow direction. The second valve may serve as a pressure restricting valve which acts independently of the operation of the first valve.

[0010] Suitably a valve member of the first valve is arranged to divide the valve chamber into two parts isolated from each other so that the first chamber part forms a part of said return flow line and the second chamber part is connected to the pressure to be controlled by means of the precontrol valve. The valve member of the first valve may in addition comprise a chamber, which can be connected either to the pressure accumulator unit or to the first chamber part. In this case a valve member of the second valve, a seat surface for the second valve and a valve spring of the second valve can be located in the chamber in the valve member so that normally it closes the connection from the pressure accumulator unit through the first chamber part into the fuel tank.

[0011] In another embodiment of the invention the valve means includes a valve member which, in its closed position, closes the return flow line and which is located in the valve chamber. In this case the first control arrangement comprises a guiding member which is movable, under the influence of the pressure to be controlled, by means of the precontrol valve between a position closing the valve member and a position opening the valve member, and the second control arrangement comprises a valve spring, against the force of which the valve member can be pressed. In this case the valve spring can, with advantage, be supported against the guiding member at its end opposite to the valve member so that the guiding member acts on the valve member through the valve spring.

[0012] The guiding member may be provided with a shaft part which, in the case of a helical or coil spring, is arranged inside the valve spring. In this case, the end of the guiding member at the side of the valve member can be provided with a turnable nut for adjusting the prestress of the valve spring. The valve spring and the guiding member may, in this case, be located in a second chamber which is separated from said valve chamber by means of the valve member.

[0013] Embodiments of the invention will now be de-

scribed, by way of example only, with particular reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a sectional view of one embodiment of a valve arrangement according to the invention; and

Figure 2 is a sectional view of another embodiment of a valve arrangement according to the invention.

[0014] In Figures 1 and 2 the same reference numerals have been used where possible to designate the same or similar parts. In particular, reference numeral 1 indicates a common pressure accumulator unit included in a fuel feeding system of an engine and from which fuel is injected, in a manner known as such, into at least two cylinders of the engine (not shown). A valve unit 3 including a valve chamber 4 is fixed, by means of screw bolts 2, to the common pressure accumulator unit 1. A pressure space 1a in the pressure accumulator unit 1 is connected by means of a duct 5 to the valve chamber 4 and, from the valve chamber 4, by a duct 6 and a pipe 7 to a fuel tank (not shown). In addition to this return flow line, the pressure space 1a is naturally in connection with the fuel tank through a fuel feeding line and pumping means in association therewith etc. Since, however, these parts do not relate to the present invention, they have not been shown in the drawings and have not been described in detail. When the engine is running, the pressure in the pressure space 1a is typically, for instance, in the order of 1200 bar.

[0015] In the embodiment of Figure 1, the valve chamber 4 provides a valve seat 9 for a valve member 8 of a first valve housed within the valve chamber 4. The valve member 8 divides the valve chamber 4 into two parts 4a and 4b which are isolated from each other. In order to control the valve, the chamber part 4b is connected to a servo oil circuit 10 of the engine, whereby the control pressure normally closing the valve is typically in the order of 100 bar. Opening and closing of the valve takes place by means of a precontrol valve 11, preferably a solenoid valve. Depending on the operating position of the control valve 11, either the chamber part 4b is under the control pressure, whereby the valve member 8 is in the closed position shown in Figure 1 and the valve is thus closed, or there is no pressure in the chamber part 4b, whereby the valve is open and the pressure space 1a is in connection through the chamber part 4a with the pipe 7 and thus with the fuel tank (not shown).

[0016] The valve member 8 includes a chamber 12 which can be connected via a duct 13 to the duct 5 and through to the pressure space 1a. The chamber 12 is also connected via a duct 14 to the chamber part 4a and via the duct 6 and the pipe 7 to the fuel tank. Another valve is located in the chamber 12 and has a valve member 15 which is urged by means of a valve spring 16 against a valve seat 12a provided by the chamber 12. This valve controls the closing of the duct 13 and thus the closing of the connection of the pressure space 1a

to the fuel tank when the influence of the pressure prevailing in the pressure space 1a on the valve member 15 is smaller than the closing force of the valve spring 16 acting on it. This valve thereby serves as a pressure limiting valve. The spring force of the valve spring 16 is selected so that it is smaller than the force of the pressure normally prevailing in the chamber part 4b and acting on the valve member 8, so that the second valve is opened before the first valve. As is apparent from Figure 1, each valve may open independently of one another.

[0017] In contrast to the Figure 1 embodiment, the embodiment of Figure 2 includes only one valve member 17, which is located in the valve chamber 4 and normally closes the connection of the pressure space 1a via the return flow line to the fuel tank. There are two separate control arrangements provided for the valve member 17. The first control arrangement comprises a guiding member 18 arranged in a chamber 19 of the valve unit 3. The guiding member 18 is movable between positions opening and closing the valve under the influence of the pressure controlled by the precontrol valve 11 in an analogous way with regard to the description of the Figure 1 embodiment. In Figure 2 the guiding member 18 is in its closing position, whereby it is pressed against shoulders 19a in the chamber 19. In its opening position (not shown), the guiding member 18 is not pressed against the shoulders 19a.

[0018] The second control arrangement of the Figure 2 embodiment includes a valve spring 20 one end of which acts on the valve member 17 through a plate-like element 21. The other end of the valve spring 20 is supported against the guiding member 18. Thus the guiding member 18 acts on the valve member 17 through the valve spring 20. The guiding member 18 additionally comprises a shaft part 18a having, at its end remote from the member 18, a turnable nut 22 for adjusting the prestress of the valve spring 20. As shown in Figure 2, the valve spring is a helical or coil spring and the shaft part 18a is positioned inside the spring.

[0019] In the embodiment of Figure 2, the control of the valve member 17 provided by the valve spring 20 is completely independent of other control arrangements and can be utilized for providing the pressure limiting function. Although the guiding member 18 is only connected indirectly, through the valve spring 20, to the valve member 17, it is possible to provide a separate valve function under the control of the precontrol valve 11. Thus, when there is no pressure in the chamber 19, the guiding member 18 moves together with the spring 20, the element 21 and the valve member 17 into a position in which the connection of the pressure space 1a to the fuel tank is opened via the flow line 5, valve chamber 4, duct 6 and pipe 7. In order to ensure that the controlling pressure in the chamber 19, after connection thereof by the precontrol valve 11, is able to cause movement of the guiding member 18 back into its closing position against the shoulders 19a, the upper part of the chamber 19 may also be provided with small should-

ders as shown in Figure 2.

[0020] On the basis of the above it is possible in the embodiments of Figures 1 and 2 described above to limit the pressure in the pressure space 1a by means of the valve springs 16 and 20, respectively. In addition the pressure space 1a can be connected at any time to the fuel tank of the engine by means of the precontrol valve 11, i.e. in order to circulate fuel for preheating thereof before starting of the engine and in order to depressurize the high pressure fuel system in an emergency situation very quickly or in a normal situation in connection with stopping of the engine.

[0021] In the embodiment of Figure 1, two flow lines with different diameter are available, whereby for circulation of fuel and for those cases when the fuel feeding system must quickly be depressurized the flow line with the larger diameter may with advantage be utilized. In the embodiment of Figure 2, all the valve operations are related to the same flow line, whereby the selection of the diameter of the flow line is a compromise between, on the one hand, the needs for the circulation of fuel and, on the other hand, the pressure limiting function and in association therewith the stiffness of the valve spring and the requirement of space. On the other hand in this case only one valve member is required.

[0022] The invention is not restricted to the embodiments shown but several modifications are feasible within the scope of the ensuing claims.

Claims

1. A control and safety valve arrangement of a fuel feeding system of an internal combustion engine, especially a large diesel engine, in which fuel is pumped from a fuel tank at least to one common pressure accumulator unit (1) and is fed therefrom under high pressure for injection into at least two cylinders of the engine, **characterized** in that the pressure accumulator unit (1, 1a) is connected to the fuel tank by a separate return flow line (5, 6, 7) which is provided with valve means having separate first and second control arrangements operationally independent of each other so that the pressure accumulator unit (1) can be connected to the fuel tank by means of the first control arrangement under the influence of a separate control pressure when necessary and in addition by means of the second control arrangement if the pressure in the pressure accumulator unit (1) exceeds a certain selected limit value.
2. A valve arrangement according to claim 1, **characterized** in that said first control arrangement comprises a precontrol valve (11), preferably a solenoid valve, for controlling said control pressure.
3. A valve arrangement according to claim 1 or 2, **characterized** in that said control pressure is hydraulically implemented, preferably as a part of a servo oil circuit (10) of the engine.
4. A valve arrangement according to any one of the preceding claims, **characterized** in that said second control arrangement comprises a valve spring (16, 20) having a spring force and prestress of which determine the valve opening pressure in accordance with said limit value.
5. A valve arrangement according to any one of the preceding claims, **characterized** in that the valve means are located in a common valve unit (3) fixed to the pressure accumulator unit (1) and comprising a valve chamber (4) through which said return flow line (5, 6, 7) is led.
6. A valve arrangement according to claim 5, **characterized** in that the return flow line (5, 6, 7) is provided with two valves arranged functionally in successive order, the first valve in the flow direction being controlled by said first control arrangement and being located in said valve chamber (4), and the second valve in the flow direction being controlled by said second control arrangement so that its opening force is smaller than that of the said first valve.
7. A valve arrangement according to claim 6, **characterized** in that a valve member (8) of the first valve is arranged to divide said valve chamber (4) into two parts (4a, 4b) isolated from each other so that the first chamber part (4a) forms a part of said return flow line (5, 6, 7) and the second chamber part (4b) is connected to the pressure to be controlled by means of the first control arrangement.
8. A valve arrangement according to claim 6 or 7, **characterized** in that the valve member (8) of the first valve comprises a chamber (12) connectible to the pressure accumulator unit (1, 1a) and to said first chamber part (4a), and in that the first valve has a valve member (15), a seat surface (12a) and a valve spring (16) which are located in said chamber (12), the valve member (15), in its normally closed position, closing the connection from the pressure accumulator unit (1, 1a) through said first chamber part (4a) into the fuel tank.
9. A valve arrangement according to any one of claims 1 to 5, **characterized** in that the valve means include a valve member (17) which is located in said valve chamber (4) and which, in its closed position, closes said return flow line (5, 6, 7), in that said first control arrangement comprises a guiding member (18) which is movable under the influence of the pressure to be controlled by means of the precontrol valve (11) between a position closing the valve

member (17) and a position opening the valve member (17), and in that said second control arrangement comprises a valve spring (20) against the force of which the valve member (17) can be pressed.

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10. A valve arrangement according to claim 9, **characterized** in that the valve spring (20) is supported against said guiding member (18) at its end opposite to the valve member (17) so that the guiding member (18) acts on the valve member (17) through the valve spring (20). 10
11. A valve arrangement according to claim 9 or 10, **characterized** in that the guiding member (18) includes a shaft part (18a) which is arranged inside the valve spring (20) and the end of which at the side of the valve member (17) is provided with a turnable nut (22) for adjusting the prestress of the valve spring (20). 15 20
12. A valve arrangement according to any one of claims 9 to 11, **characterized** in that the valve spring (20) and the guiding member (18) are located in a second chamber (19) which is separated from said valve chamber (4) by the valve member (17). 25

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Fig. 1

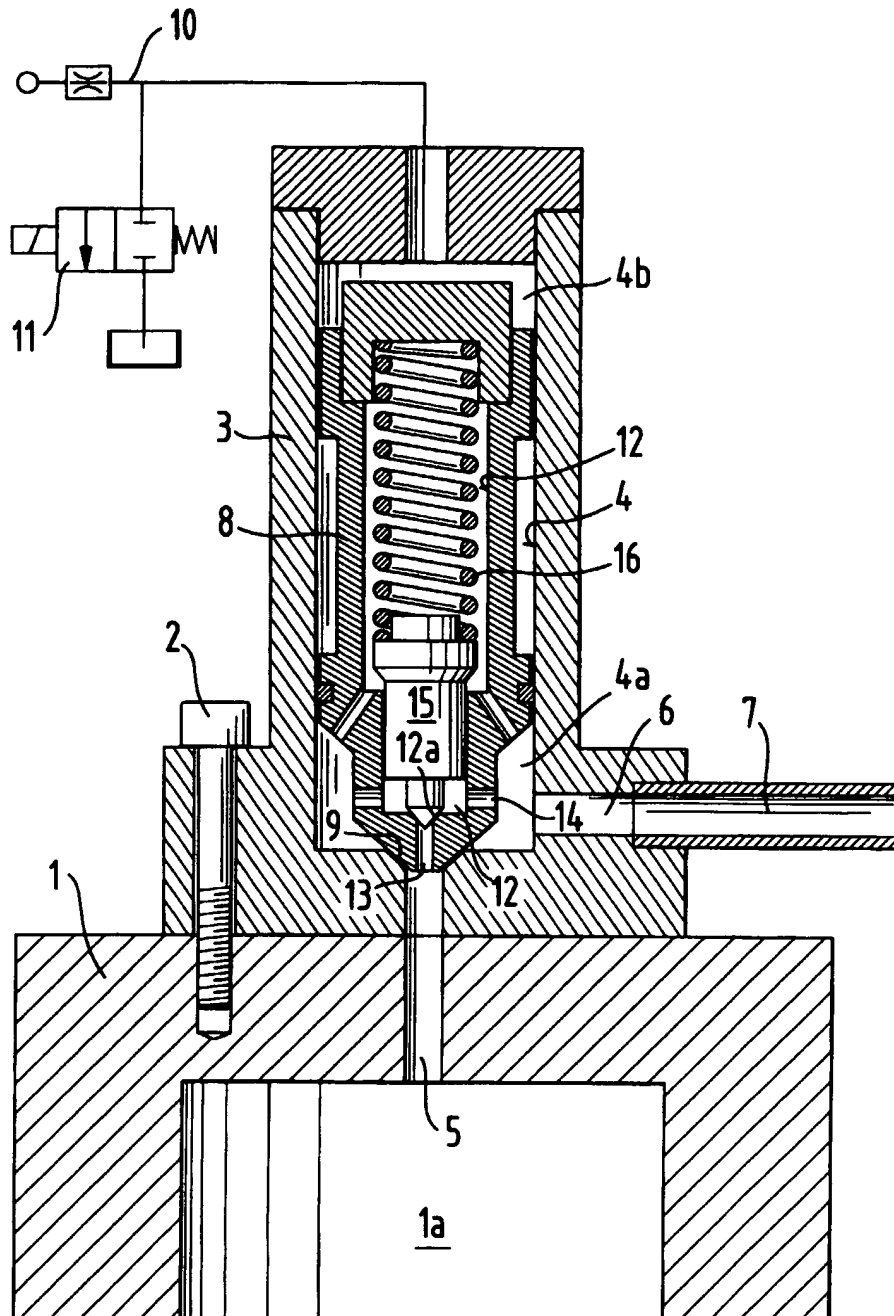


Fig. 2

